

THE ANATOMY OF CONGRESS

Where Is the Nation's Majority Party?

SAMUEL LUBELL

CONGRESS has often been attacked as a veritable "house of misrepresentatives." Its members are widely portrayed as being concerned primarily with local interests or with obstructing whoever happens to be President. Because of the overrepresentation of rural areas and the seniority system through which committee chairmen are selected, it is often contended that Congress as a whole fails to reflect the true popular will.

Congress is what it is primarily because that is what the American people are like. This holds true not only in the sense that individual Congressmen are typical of the average run of our citizenry. Beyond that, it is really our own weaknesses and strengths, extremism and moderation, which give shape to Congressional decision and indecision. A seat-by-seat study of the make-up of Congress shows that in recent years at least it has become far more sensitive to national issues than most people realize.

Similarly, although Congress and the Presidency have played deadlock with one another since 1938, today's struggle between the White House and Capitol Hill is a very

different affair from the old stalemate of Roosevelt's time.

One reason why these changes have gone unrecognized, I suspect, is that the dynamics of voting for Congress have not received anything like the attention that has been given Presidential voting. For my own part I never fully appreciated how vastly different the two voting processes were until the 1954 campaign, when I tried to penetrate into how people picked their Congressmen. The results of my talks with several thousand voters were something of a revelation.

As might be expected, I found that most people do not even know the names of their Congressional candidates.

Most people, including many who protest stoutly that they always "go for the best man," simply vote the party label to which they are predisposed, and it is through such party voting that the predominant political trends in the country get registered. But many other persons try hard to form considered judgments on the candidates. Others assert their independence by clutching at even the smallest straw of identification which makes them feel they "know" one of the candidates.

People justified their preference for a particular candidate with remarks like these: "I shook hands with him at an American Legion meeting"; "I've seen his name on more billboards. I never even heard of the man running against him."

Other things being equal, the Congressman in office enjoys a considerable advantage in that he usually is better known than his opponent. Often, in fact, "maverick" legislators appear whose following cuts across both parties and who get reelected repeatedly regardless of the trend in the country.

LAST month, in "The Return of Two-Party Politics," SAMUEL LUBELL showed how the moderate elements in the nation have refused to cast their lot permanently with either party. Now he shows how closely this situation is reflected in Congress, where political control changes hands with almost every major election. Mr. Lubell, who was educated at the City College of New York and the Columbia School of Journalism, is a free-lance writer for the newspapers and magazines, and the author of the widely acclaimed *The Future of American Politics* (1952). The present article, like his previous one, is drawn from his book *Revolt of the Moderates*, which Harper will bring out this month. (Copyright © 1956 by Samuel Lubell.)

Some of these mavericks rely on personal charm. At other times a man may run under one party label and then defy everything ordinarily associated with that party. While in Congress, for example, Jacob Javits, although a Republican, voted identically with New York Democrats on most issues. When Javits stepped out of Congress to run for Attorney General in New York State, his district voted 67 per cent Democratic.

Still, the bulk of the voting for Congress is governed by the party trend. And that brings us to what makes present-day relations between Congress and the President so unusual—and disturbing. For since the end of World War II there really has been no dominant or sustained trend in favor of either the Democrats or Republicans.

ONE effect, of course, was seen in the 1954 election, which gave the Democrats control of Congress while a Republican tenanted the White House. Herbert Hoover, after 1930, and Woodrow Wilson, after 1918, also had to grapple with hostile legislatures. In both these instances, though, unified party control of the Presidency and Congress was reestablished at the next election to continue for a considerable time. In recent years, party control of Congress was also lost by Truman after 1946.

Twice before in our history we have undergone the ordeal of prolonged periods of divided government. For the twenty years preceding the Civil War, and again for the twenty-two years from 1874 to 1896, no President had the support of a Congress of his own party through his complete term. Both these periods were remarkably like our own in one respect—they were years during which political loyalties were being reshuffled and neither party held a decisive majority. Once the forces of realignment had completed their task and one party emerged as the undisputed majority in the country, it had no trouble commanding both approaches to Pennsylvania Avenue. But while the voters tossed in restless transition, control of the government remained divided and shifted from election to election.

This historical pattern suggests that a new, third dimension needs to be added to our thinking about what governs the balance of power between the White House and Capitol Hill. Most students of history agree that this balance is determined primarily by how "strong" a character the President is or by how critical are the times. But our history has been marked by the alternation of not only strong and weak Presidents, times of crisis and relaxation, but of divided and united government, reflecting the absence or presence of a clear-cut party majority.

In the light of this, the usual solutions which are trotted out when the going in Washington gets tough will hardly meet our need. Some persons will continue to cry, "We must have a strong man in the White House," or "Congress needs reorganizing" to reflect the will of the public. And yet the root fault will lie with the people themselves, in why they refuse to choose decisively between the parties. At least two broad segments of the population—the farmers and racial extremists in the South—are consciously developing a technique of working both sides of the political street. This spirit of "neutralism" between the parties runs strong among other groups as well.

What would have to be done politically for either the Democrats or Republicans to achieve a decisive majority? Until that is brought about, how are we to judge the battling between Congress and the President bound to develop in the years ahead?

Largely to answer these two questions I have tried a novel experiment in dissecting the anatomy of Congress, by examining how every seat in the House of Representatives has shifted or held since 1932. At first, this probing into the Congressional "innards" yielded what seemed like a strange contradiction—the same trends of social and economic change were making one part of Congress more rigid in its party loyalty and other districts more volatile and uncertain.

Explored more fully, though, this contradiction proved to be a reflection of the struggle between extremism and moderation, of the past against the future, which consti-

tutes the political crisis of our generation.

It is in the rigidly held seats that the feuds of the past are most jealously locked, while the newer emerging issues of our times are making themselves felt through the more closely contested Congressional districts. The stalemate that prevails in Congress today reduces itself to the paradox that the moderate political elements in the country dominate the shifting seats that determine which party controls Congress, but the "sure" seats shelter the extremists in both parties.

IN SHEER numbers it is surprising how few truly contested seats there are. Following through each district as best one can despite redistricting changes, we find that 220 seats, or more than half of the entire House, never have changed parties since 1932. Another 64 seats have swung so rarely—only once or twice, and prior to 1940—that they can be put in the same class.

This means that during most of the years since the New Deal the party struggle for Congress has been fought out in terms of roughly a third of the seats. Even this estimate overstates the number of seats which can be considered as really contested. Within the "fluctuating third" of the House will be found 39 more seats where the winner got at least 60 per cent of the vote in 1954.

The Democrats show up with a considerably higher proportion of rigid districts than do the Republicans. Of 232 seats held by the Democrats in 1954, as many as 155 never have gone Republican since at least 1932. Another six were won by the Republicans once or twice prior to 1940, but have been Democratic since.

Those figures pretty much tell the story of how heavy run the odds against the Republicans' regaining their old stand as the nation's majority party. The 161 seats which have been Democratic since 1940 represent 37 per cent of the whole House membership. In another 23 seats—5 per cent more of the House membership—the Democrats won in 1954 with at least 60 per cent of the vote. This leaves hardly 10 per cent of the House

seats for the Republicans to go to work on.

A clean sweep of the contested seats would give the Republicans a sizable majority, but it would be a majority subject to quick overturning by a counter-swing in relatively few districts. To obtain a firm hold on Congress, one which can be counted on for election after election, the Republicans must crack some of the rigidly held Democratic seats.

The largest proportion of these "sure" Democratic seats are in the South, of course. Less generally realized is the fact that the second largest bloc of such seats is in Northern cities, where the Negro vote has been becoming steadily more important. Of the 161 seats which have been Democratic since at least 1940, 98 lie in the South, while 45 are concentrated in Northern cities or nearby industrial areas. Thirty-four of the Northern districts cluster in ten of the larger cities.

Between 1940 and 1950 the Negro population in these ten cities leaped more than two-thirds, while the white population increased less than 4 per cent. In these cities Negroes now account for roughly 12 per cent of the population. Moreover, as their numbers have increased so has their Democratic party loyalty. Negroes, in fact, have been the one voting element in the country which has grown more Democratic with every election since 1936. Truman got a heavier proportion of the Negro vote than did Roosevelt, while Stevenson did even better among Negroes than Truman.

Given this composition of "sure" seats, the conflicts of race and economic class are clearly conflicts from which the Democrats cannot escape.

And time seems to be sharpening these conflicts. The migration of Negroes from the South is working inexorably to increase the number of rigidly Democratic seats in the North which are particularly sensitive to racial problems: In Philadelphia, for example, only one Congressional district was as much as 20 per cent Negro in 1932, while two more were over 15 per cent Negro. By 1952 two of the city's six districts were over 1

fifth Negro—one being as high as 44 per cent—and two more were more than 15 per cent Negro. In 1952 Negroes represented 16 per cent of the registered voters in Philadelphia.

In Detroit the number of Negroes soared from 4 per cent of the population in 1920 to 16 per cent in 1950. There were 97 census tracts without any Negroes in 1940. By 1950 the increased Negro population had spread so widely through the city that there were only 17 census tracts without Negroes. Detroit in 1954 elected its first Negro Congressman, bringing to three the number of Negroes in the House.

THE migration of population may also be sharpening the economic conflict between the two wings of "sure" Democratic seats. Except for New Orleans, no Southern city is large enough to lie in more than one Congressional district. This, of course, means that the economic solidarity of the urban districts in the South is thinned by the wide range of income elements embraced in the district. In many of the larger Northern cities, though, the flight to the suburbs has left behind whole districts with a preponderant concentration of low-income voters.

In some of these cities during the last few years, the Republican Congressional strength has been virtually wiped out by the combined effects of the exodus to the suburbs and the growing solidarity of the Negro. In 1954 the Republicans lost the last of Detroit's six seats—Michigan District 17—mainly because of the reshuffling of population through the city. In Chicago the Republicans have been pressed back to the outskirts, holding three partially suburban districts.

In Philadelphia, Boston, and Manhattan, the remaining Republicans are making their last stand veritably on the one-yard line. In each of these three urban centers the last Republican seat was won in 1954 by a fraction of one per cent of the vote. The Boston district, which embraces aristocratic Beacon Hill, would have gone Democratic in 1952 and 1954 if it had not been gerrymandered to include nearby suburbs.

The most heavily Democratic districts in

the North, in short, are becoming those which are poorest economically and which have the largest Negro populations—two characteristics which tend to pull the representatives of these districts back to the old appeals of the New Deal. If this trend continues, as seems likely, the Congressmen from these districts will find themselves in sharpening conflict with the Southern districts, both with the anti-Negro sentiments so strong in the rural South, and the economic conservatism of the rising middle-class elements in the Southern cities.

The impressive show of party harmony which the Democrats in Congress have mustered since 1952 is certain to pass. It seems primarily a change in political manners, brought about by the chastisement of defeat, rather than any change in political character. Far from being outgrown, the old inner Democratic conflicts have been gathering new strength.

The underlying tensions between these two wings of "sure" Democratic seats are sufficiently intense so that the cracking apart of the Democratic party must be rated as a possibility. Still, two opposing considerations should be borne in mind.

First, there is the astonishing ability of American political parties to reconcile the conflicts which threaten to tear them apart. The hidden strength of the American political party lies in the fact that it serves as an arena for hostile political elements. The need to reconcile these clashing elements compels each party to bring to the surface unifying compromises, without which neither the Democrats nor the Republicans could have survived this long.

Second, the very intensity of this North-South conflict makes it difficult for the Republicans to appeal to either faction in truly dramatic fashion—since any open appeal to one side might solidify the other in the Democratic ranks.

Some Republican strategists have argued that since the Negro vote is so strongly Democratic it should be written off as lost. Other GOP leaders are hopeful that the Republicans may profit politically from the fact

that the desegregation decision was handed down by a Republican Chief Justice, Earl Warren. My own studies of Negro voting indicate that the Negro attachment to the Democratic party has been as much economic as racial in motivation. As the lowest-paid worker in our industrial society, the Negro is both class and race conscious. Republican prospects of cracking the Negro vote seem about on a par with their chances among other workers.

Still, it does not follow that "writing off the Negro vote" would help the Republicans in their fight for control of Congress. The areas of the South which are most sensitive to the race issue are precisely those most insistent upon maintaining a one-party system locally and a solid Democratic delegation in Congress. Among the racial extremists there is no real drive for political competition except in Presidential voting, where they are seeking to counter the influence of the Northern Negro. In Congress their aim is to keep the South separate and solid from the rest of the nation.

Significantly, none of the seven Southern seats the Republicans won in 1954 are districts where racial issues dominate. Three cover areas of traditional Mountain Republican strength; the other four seats are urban or suburban. Throughout the South in 1952 Eisenhower carried 38 Congressional districts. In only seven or eight of these were racial feelings paramount.

The main Republican hope for further gains in the South, in short, would seem to lie in an economic appeal, and economic interest, as it turns out, is also the strongest force reshaping the Republican party in the rest of the country.

IF THE tensions of race and economic class are lodged in the skeletal bones of the Democratic party, farm and foreign policy seem the main conflicts embedded in the "sure" Republican seats.

Of 123 districts which have been unwaveringly Republican since 1940, only six are completely urban, 30 are either suburban or a mixture of suburb and city, while al-

most 70 are more than 40 per cent rural. Nearly three-fourths of the urban or suburban seats are in the East or on the West Coast, while about two-thirds of the rural seats are in the Midwest.

The Republican party battle has always followed sectional lines, of course. Most historians trace this back to the bitter economic struggle between the industrial East and the agricultural Midwest that accompanied our rise to world economic power in the 1890's. For thirty years after the Civil War, farm prices, which were exposed to world competition, dropped steadily, while the profit margins of tariff-protected industry rose. The Populist uprising has often been pictured as a revolt against the "international money power" and its agents in Wall Street.

Although some of this old economic hostility may be revived by the current drop in farm prices, the sectional Republican cleavage in recent years developed mainly out of our involvement in World War II. In 1936, when the Democrats swept all but 89 seats, the Eastern Republicans held more districts than did their Midwestern cousins. But in the elections which followed, the GOP gained much more heavily in the Midwest. During the war years the Midwest exceeded the East in the number of Republican seats by more than 20, the largest difference since 1918.

Since the war's end, though, a new pattern of Congressional realignment has been at work. Perhaps the outstanding feature of this new realignment has been the progress that the Republicans have made in establishing themselves as a *national party*, with strength in every section of the country. Compared with 1938, when the anti-Roosevelt coalition first came into control of the House, the GOP has lost four seats in the East and picked up four in the Midwest. The impressive Republican gains have come on the Pacific Coast, in the South, and in the Mountain States.

One result which already has registered has been a shift of the balance of power within the Republican party. Since 1946 the Pacific Coast has accounted for more Re-

publican seats than the difference between the Eastern and Midwestern Republican strength. California, today, comes close to wielding the balance of votes in any sectional conflict within the Republican party.

That the means through which the Republicans are seeking to nationalize their following are primarily economic is evident from the districts they held in 1954 which they never won during the war.

Outside the West Coast, there are 13 such seats. Four are in Nevada, Utah, Montana, and Arizona, while five are in the South, four of these being predominantly urban or suburban. The others are the Eastern Shore of Maryland, which has a Southern orientation, another largely suburban Maryland seat, Louisville and its suburbs, and Indianapolis.

The transformation the Republican party is going through might be summed up as an effort to hold its anti-war, rural following in the Midwest, even while reducing the latter's influence within the GOP itself by gaining new economic strength in the South, on the West Coast, and in the Mountain States.

The two most vulnerable spots for the Republicans are in some of the Eastern industrial centers, and in the Midwest where the GOP suffered most heavily in 1948.

The 1948 election, as a matter of fact, provides a rough but revealing outline of what the Democrats would have to do to regain their old New Deal ascendancy. In that vote nearly all the wartime Republican gains were wiped out and enough rural seats were won by the Democrats to drop the GOP strength in the Midwest below its 1938 level. At the same time the Democrats also won back most, though not all, of the urban seats which they lost in 1946.

All these factors are not likely to reappear unless there is a considerable economic downturn. Even if the Democrats were swept back into power, they would face formidable difficulties both in holding that majority and in achieving sufficient internal cohesion among its elements to be able to function. On the one hand, a Democratic

victory could be expected to start up the thermostat of Southern insurgency and conflict with the Northern urban elements. Then an economic revival would soon push the Democrats against the ceiling of their economic appeal among more moderate conservative elements—the threat of inflation.

In short, because of their backlog of Southern seats the Democrats can muster a large numerical majority in Congress far more readily than can the Republicans. But having done so, the Democrats find themselves torn by all the problems of racial and religious tolerance, foreign policy, and preservation of the gains of economic elements that range from the slums to the new spreading middle class.

How delicate is the political balance between the various economic elements is evident in the most closely contested districts. Fifteen seats have shifted at least twice in the last four elections, four being won in 1954 by less than 1 per cent, while 13 more seats break almost even between the parties.

Two-thirds of these seats are hybrid districts, part urban and suburban, or part farm and city, or a mixture of farm, city, and suburbs. Any appreciable shift in the economic balance that affects some one of the major voting elements in these districts is apt to shift the seat. In Indiana's eighth district, for example, the Republicans in 1954 actually held a slight edge in Evansville, which ordinarily would have insured their victory. But the GOP loss in the surrounding farm and coal-mining counties swung the seat to the Democrats.

Across the country there are enough such hybrid districts to tilt the balance of control.

In other words, the narrow party balance in Congress is a surprisingly sensitive reflection of the same divisions of economic interest and the same concern to preserve the post-depression gains which have led so many voters to develop political insomnia when trying to choose between the parties. Both in these fluctuations and in the rigidity of its unchanging seats, Congress now mirrors the conflicting forces throughout the country.

We should not overlook the new sensitivity of Congress to national issues, reflecting the many forces operating to nationalize the basis of American politics. There will continue to be Congressmen who think exclusively in terms of some single sectional interest like cotton or silver. But such changes as the spread of industry through the country, the upgrading in economic standing of most Americans, and the impact of technology upon the farm belt have tended to draw much the same conflicts of economic class across the whole country.

Up to now these changes have brought an equilibrium but not real unity, which is perhaps the fundamental weakness in what we have termed the "revolt of the moderates." These moderate political elements represent the margin of victory in the voting for both the President and Congress, but if theirs is the balance of political power, they still have not been able to remake either party.

As far as Congress is concerned, it is doubtful that the rigidities of the past can be loosened by a tactic of balancing one party against the other. How people vote for Congress, as was pointed out earlier, revolves around the choice of "the man" or "the party." In the absence of a strong party trend, the pace of change in Congress tends to be slow. The men already in office are more easily reelected. Many seemingly "sure" seats are not even contested. Only a strong party trend can change all this.

In denying either party a majority, the moderate elements risk defeating themselves. Their "revolt" must be put down as a transitional movement rather than as a solution of our political crisis. The battle against extremism and the past cannot be won so long as the moderates remain "above both parties." To carry the country they must cast their lot decisively with one or the other party.

One further possibility should not be overlooked—an extremist attempt to realign the parties. The most likely form such a thrust for power would take would be to seek to establish a new anti-foreign, "states' rights" coalition, embracing both the racial revolt in the Democratic South and the dis-

illusionments over foreign policy within the Republican ranks.

This possibility must be taken seriously. Particularly in the deep South, the extremists are sweeping into political rule, and when emotions of such violence are unloosed there is no telling how far they may sweep. Spreading industrialization has also weakened the South's traditional allegiance to lower tariffs, building a growing protectionist sentiment. The South's support for foreign aid has also declined dramatically in recent years.

It may indeed be an omen of things to come that when Herman Talmadge began his campaign to unseat Senator Walter George, the issue he drummed away on through the winter of 1955-56 was foreign aid. Talmadge's attacks had enough effect so that Senator George was driven to oppose Eisenhower's request for a long-range extension of the foreign-aid program.

If such a "states' rights" coalition ever did sweep into power in this country, it would be a reproduction of the tragedy now engulfing South Africa. While this danger that we will crack apart as a nation cannot be precluded entirely, both our history and political character indicate that in this country the forces of unification will win out in the end, however long the torment.

STILL, how do deadlocks of such intensity and complexity as the one we now face get broken? It may be helpful to examine briefly the long stalemate that prevailed the last time this country had two evenly matched parties.

The panic of 1873 ushered in the closest voting and most indecisive political period this country has ever known. In the 1874 elections the Democrats won the House of Representatives for the first time since the start of the Civil War. Not for twenty-two years were the Republicans able to re-establish sustained control of the Presidency and both houses of Congress.

When the election returns for these years are studied they reveal an almost unbelievable rigidity in party allegiances. Who won the Presidency was settled from one election

to the next by the shifting of a finger count of states, chiefly Indiana, New York, and Connecticut.

Even within the "doubtful" states the rigidity of voting was amazing. In Ohio, for example, the voting was so close that it led to McKinley's being gerrymandered into the Presidency. Each time the Ohio legislature changed party control it redistricted the Congressional seats, paying special attention to McKinley's district. Five times between 1876 and 1890 his district was revamped in an effort to defeat him. In 1882 McKinley squeezed through by eight votes, but a Democratic Congress refused to seat him. Not until 1890 was a gerrymander hit upon that finally beat him.

The indignation aroused by this "outrageous gerrymander," records Joseph P. Smith, an Ohio historian, and McKinley's "magnificent fight . . . for re-election . . . led the press of the state to declare for him for Governor. . . ." McKinley's election as governor in 1891 and 1893 made him the GOP nominee for President in 1896.

In Indiana, 32 counties were unwaveringly Republican through the 1872-92 period; another 39 counties were equally strongly Democratic, while only 21 counties did any shifting between elections.

Each of these three blocs of counties cast roughly a third of the state's vote. From 1876 through 1892 neither the Democratic nor Republican counties fluctuated by more than 3 per cent in their voting. The ups and downs which swung Indiana every four years from one party column to the other came in the shifting counties. Not until 1896 could either party get an actual majority of the vote in these shifting counties or in the state as a whole.

Mainly this rigidity in voting reflected the strength of the political chains which had been forged even prior to the Civil War and which were hammered harder by that bloody struggle. That these loyalties can have remained so inflexible for so long becomes all the more remarkable considering how mighty was the sweep of events during the years after the Civil War.

Between 1860 and 1900 our population doubled, a third of the 44,000,000 increase representing the arrival of new immigrants from abroad. Virtually every phase of American living was transformed by a succession of inventions—the harvester and thresher, electric lighting, the typewriter, telephone, and telegraph; also the endless variety of machines which replaced manual labor, from the linotype to the shoe stitcher.

Ida Tarbell wrote of the era as one which was marked by the "nationalizing of business." Not only business but virtually everything else was being nationalized. In that fact, I believe, will be found the key to the politics of the period.

At the start of this era, neither the physical, social, nor economic basis for a truly national political coalition existed. This whole age can be said to have been devoted to bringing into being the basis for such a coalition. It was an age of mergers and "trusts" in politics as well as business. In Philadelphia, for example, each individual ward leader had acted like a minor feudal baron until Boise Penrose came along. Penrose had been elected to the state legislature by reform elements who were trying vainly to wrest political power from the aldermen by centralizing the management of the city in a mayor. Penrose persuaded Matt Quay, the state boss, to have the necessary law passed, although the argument used would hardly have pleased the reformers. "You can control one man," Penrose told Quay, "but a dozen ignorant saloonkeepers can raise hell."

Assisting this process of political consolidation was the expansion of the power of state governments. In Cincinnati, George Cox was still only one of many ward bosses until he allied with Governor Joseph Foraker. Through the State Board of Public Works, Foraker turned over to Cox the patronage power over two thousand jobs. The next year Foraker carried Hamilton County for the first time in three tries. Cox soon became the undisputed boss in Cincinnati.

ECONOMICALLY, as well, the basis for a more nationalized politics was being built up

steadily. Between 1866 and 1890 railroad mileage increased fivefold, from 35,000 to 163,562 miles of track, as both ends of the continent were linked. The number of Federal employees was six times as high in 1900 as in 1861. The steady commercialization of agriculture was evidenced by a nearly tenfold increase in the use of fertilizers, although the number of farms did not quite triple.

But the truly watershed event of the age was the emergence of the United States as a world economic power. In 1874 our foreign trade accounts showed an export surplus for the first time. Before the Civil War half of our imports consisted of finished manufactures. By 1900 manufactured goods made up only a fourth of the things we bought from abroad. It was at the turn of the century that the value of manufactures we exported first exceeded the value of manufactured products we imported.

Through this whole period of deadlock numerous efforts were made to realign the country. But somehow the political pieces for an effective coalition defied being put together. The trouble was that the pieces did not belong to the same puzzle. If some groups were stirred to protest by the squeeze that accompanied the economic transformation of the country, others continued to vote "as they had shot" in the Civil War. The different third parties tried to break free of the Democratic and Republican hands, but these "crusades" had a strange way of simultaneously splitting and solidifying the party coalitions. In Iowa, for example, the Populist revolt strengthened the Republican sentiments of the German Americans, who had no use for the temperance and anti-immigrant feelings that went along with Populism.

In retrospect, it seems clear that before a decisive realignment could take place three developments were necessary: first, the vengeful memory of the Civil War had to fade; second, the sense of economic cohesiveness had to be strengthened; and, third, a new generation had to come of age to serve as the carrier for these changes.

By the early 1890's these three developments had moved pretty much in place. In 1890 the Democrats won the governorships in Michigan and Wisconsin and, the following year, in Iowa, indicating that even Republicans no longer considered it treason to vote for a Democrat. In 1892 the Democrats went on to win both houses of Congress in an astonishing sweep that cracked even such hitherto stalwart Republican states as Massachusetts, Iowa, and Michigan.

At this point, in short, not only was the deadlock showing signs of being decided, but it seemed that the Democrats might emerge triumphant. Then came the event which wrecked the Democratic hopes.

Most historians date the political turn from the McKinley-Bryan campaign. The election returns indicate that the decisive event really was the panic of 1893. The long party deadlock had begun with a depression—that of 1873—and it was ended with this second depression twenty years later.

SO MUCH more severe than any previous depression, the 1893 collapse forced the closing of 642 banks in one year. The new edition of Webster's Dictionary which appeared that year included for the first time a definition of the word "unemployment." Despite these hardships, our rise to economic power was not slowed. In 1893 our exports of iron and steel products exceeded our iron and steel imports for the first time.

In the 1894 elections the Democrats failed to return a single member to Congress in twenty-four states—including Indiana—and returned only one Democrat in three other states. In the twelve largest cities in the country the Democratic representation in Congress dropped from 29 seats in 1892 to only 12 in 1894.

These same cities provided almost 60 per cent of McKinley's plurality in the whole country. In 1872, when Grant scored his landslide reelection, these cities furnished 9 per cent of the total vote in the country. In 1896 they cast 13 per cent of it.

This whole period was marked by a tremendous expansion of the urban popula-

tion, and the "rise of the city" has been credited with being the means through which the long political deadlock was broken. And yet when we study how these cities voted in each election after 1872, a significant fact stands out.

The Republican strength did not mount steadily as the urban population expanded, as might be expected. In 1892, for example, the voting trend in the cities actually seemed to favor the Democrats. What happened was that the growth of the cities brought together vast numbers of people who, by swinging together on an issue which struck a common voting nerve, produced a heavy enough shift to upset the old balance.

This realignment might not have held if McKinley's administration had not seen the end of the long agricultural depression and the return to prosperity. The real solidification of Republican power came in the 1904 election. In Ohio, for example, 30 counties which had been unwaveringly Democratic through the entire deadlock period showed a gain of only 3 per cent for the Republicans in 1896. In 1900 they broke another 3 per cent and in 1904, 5 per cent more, ten of the counties going Republican.

The way this long stalemate was broken suggests three conclusions.

FIRST, the tenacious strength of political loyalties should not be underestimated. Once the emotions of people become attached to a political party, an almost catastrophic event is required to cause many of them to change. In fact, a whole new generation, free of these old memories, may have to arise before a decisive change can be registered. If this is true, the present period of political indecision could continue into the 1960's, when the record births of the post-war years will be translated into voters.

Second, political realignment seems a two-stage affair. In the 1874-96 period, at least, there was no steady, gradual build-up of strength which finally overwhelmed one side. There seems first to have been a preliminary period during which old loyalties were shaken loose, while varied new political

combinations were tried, with nothing decisive happening. Once the old ties had weakened sufficiently the second stage of lasting change emerged quickly.

For some years now, of course, we have been shaking ourselves loose from old symbols and trying on new political feelings. How much more of this we must still undergo is not clear, but the grip of the past is being pried loose, finger by finger.

Third, apparently prodigious economic and social changes can take place in a country, for a time at least, without seeming to have any decisive political effect. Yet here, as well, the seemingly slow pace of change can be deceptive. Population movements and technological changes do regroup people both in their geographical and social locations, so that when they do swing the shift can be decisive.

New forces are abroad which are knitting the country closer together than ever before. In their immediate impact some of these forces seem to have a dividing effect, as in the sharpening cleavages in both the farm belt and the South. These divisions may seem like evidences that we are cracking apart. But I believe they really are signs of the necessary breaking down of old habits and old ways in preparation for a regrouping on a more unified and nationalized basis.

In short, there is no doubt in my mind that the unity of the country has been advanced immeasurably in recent years. What is uncertain is how long it may take for the new political sun to rise, and how we will manage our political affairs in the meantime.

During these years of transition we shall have to continue to look to whoever is President rather than to the Congress, or to the parties themselves, for unifying leadership. But if we are to have a President capable of rising above all the dividing influences in the country, "we the people" must also be able to rise above such influences. This, in turn, imposes a new responsibility upon all of us, particularly in determining how high a price is to be put upon domestic conciliation as against the needs of the cold war abroad.